

VZCZCXRO2503
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHGB #1147/01 0930452
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 030452Z APR 07
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0519
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 001147

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/03/2017

TAGS: PGOV PINS PINR I2

SUBJECT: BAGHDAD SECURITY PLAN FAILING TO HELP IDPS RETURN

Classified By: PRT Team Leader Joseph Gregoire for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) Summary: Baghdad PRT contacts say the Baghdad Security Plan (BSP) is failing to improve security conditions enough to allow internally displaced persons (IDPs) to return to their homes. Members of the Baghdad Provincial Council committee for migration and displacement told PRToff March 29 that few IDPs are returning to their homes and displacements continue. A staff aide for Ahmad Chalabi, chairman of popular mobilization for the BSP, said IDPs will not return to their homes until U.S. forces deploy in the areas from which they fled. The liaison officer Chalabi appointed to head the popular committee in Mansour said security in west Baghdad is a &disaster& most IDPs will not return because they know U.S. forces will leave eventually, leaving them to face alone the threats that forced them they flee. End summary.

36,000 Internally Displaced Families Registered in Baghdad

¶2. (C) Members of the Provincial Council (PC) committee for displacement and migration told PRToff that about 36,000 displaced families (consisting of an average of six family members, for a total of about 216,000 people) have registered with the PC. PC members said that data gathered from Baghdad's nine district advisory councils (DACs) and five out of six qadas (outlying areas of Baghdad Province) indicates that the following numbers of displaced families have relocated to the following areas:

9 Nissan:	5,535 families
Sadr City:	2,071 families
Kadhamiya:	6,266 families
Adhamiya:	2,500 families
Karada:	750 families
Rashid:	2,590 families
Mansour:	2,550 families
Rusafa:	300 families
Karkh:	210 families
Al-Mada,en:	2,200 families
Tarmiya:	3,750 families
Taji:	750 families
Istiqlal:	1,500 families
Mahmoudiya:	280 families
Total:	31,376 families

PC members did not have data on displaced families living in Abu Ghraib and said that some 5,000 more families have registered since the above data was collated, bringing the number of displaced families registered in Baghdad to about 36,000. They also said many families do not register their displacement, particularly Sunni families wary of approaching the predominantly Shia government. (Note: Displaced families are supposed to register with the DAC or qada council in the area in which they resettle. The DACs and qadas collate the data and provide it to the PC. End note.)

IIP Reneges on Promise to Help Sunni IDPs Register

¶ 13. (C) PC members said the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP) had agreed to register Sunni displaced families who were hesitant to deal directly with the predominantly Shia government. PC members said the IIP has collected registration data from an unknown number of Sunni displaced families, but has refused to pass the forms to the PC. (The documentation includes a photo of the head of a family, a copy of the jinsiya (a basic ID often updated) and ration card of the head of a family, the name of the head of a family, the number of family members, a family's ration card number, the name of the previous ration center, the address from which a family has fled, the address where a family currently lives, whether family members have been killed in terrorist attacks, the date a family fled their previous residence, whether a family rented or owned the home from which they fled, mobile telephone number, and additional comments.) Asked why the IIP had refused to pass the information to the PC, contacts told PRToff that the IIP is reluctant to deal with the predominantly Shia PC. (Note: The Baghdad PC consists of 51 members, 49 of whom are Shia. End note).

Dire Security Conditions Prevent IDPs from Returning

¶ 14. (C) Iraqi Sunni and Shia contacts told PRToff that the BSP is failing to improve security conditions enough to allow IDPs to return to their homes. Members of the Baghdad PC committee for migration and displacement told PRToff March 29 that few IDPs are returning to their homes, in spite of claims by the national government that a key priority of the BSP is facilitating the return of IDPs.

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¶ 15. (C) PC members said reporting from Baghdad's various DACs and qadas indicates that few of the 36,000 displaced families registered in Baghdad province have returned to their homes. PC members said about 500 Sunni and Shia families have returned to the Husseiniya area (north of the northern Baghdad Shaab neighborhood), not because of an improvement in security there, but because they were unable to support themselves on the run and were receiving no help from the Iraqi government. PC members added that many of the Shia IDPs who returned to Husseiniya had been squatting in Shaab and many of the Sunni IDPs had been squatting in Qadisiya.

¶ 16. (C) PC members said about 20-25 Sunni families have returned to Shula because of marginal improvements in security. They added that the few families that return to their homes typically try to do so in groups in order to provide collective security.

¶ 17. (C) PC members said that the prime minister's office has begun offering registered displaced families 100,000 Iraqi dinars (about USD 79.00) and registered displaced families who return to their homes 250,000 Iraqi dinars (about USD 197.00). They said that receiving either payment requires lengthy paperwork and repeated visits to government offices.

¶ 18. (C) PC members said anecdotal reporting indicates that several displaced families who have returned to their homes in Dora have been murdered. Photos of their dismembered bodies were said to have been distributed as a warning to other IDPs considering returning.

¶ 19. (C) Wameed Al-Mekhlibi, staff aide for Ahmad Chalabi, chairman of the popular mobilization strand of the BSP, told PRToff April 1 that most IDPs will not return to their homes until U.S. forces deploy in the areas from which they fled. Al-Mekhlibi said average Iraqis have little faith in the ability of Iraqi security forces to protect them, adding that in many areas Iraqi security forces had participated in displacing families.

¶10. (C) Al-Mekhlibi said Chalabi has requested 100 million Iraqi dinars from the prime minister's office to distribute payments to displaced families that return to their homes, but added that he does not expect the request will be granted. Al-Mekhlibi said Chalabi would like to provide returning families with one million dinars (USD 790) each, which would amount to compensation for only 100 families.

¶11. (C) Popular committee liaison officer for Mansour, Emad Al-Samarrie, said families displaced from west Baghdad will not return because the situation there is a &disaster.⁸ Al-Samarrie said far too few U.S. forces have deployed in west Baghdad to provide security necessary for IDPs to return, and many would not return even if more U.S. forces patrolled the area. He said average citizens say that militias and insurgents are lying low for now, but once U.S. forces draw down, they eventually will be left to face the threats that forced them to flee in the first place. (Note: Emad Al-Samarrie, a Sunni and former Baathist, was the military intelligence chief for the Wasit and Diyala provinces under the previous regime. Chalabi says he recruited Al-Samarrie as a liaison officer to reach out to former Baathists and insurgents in west Baghdad. Al-Samarrie says he moves regularly within west Baghdad to avoid assassination by Shia militiamen linked to the Badr Brigade or Jaysh Al-Mehdi. End note.)

Comment

¶12. (C) Several PRT contacts have said that sectarian cleansing continues across the city in spite of the Baghdad Security Plan. Our interlocutors are not optimistic that IDPs will return to their homes unless U.S. forces unambiguously control the areas from which they fled. Although our contacts from across the political spectrum say that increased U.S. forces are necessary to pacify the city, they routinely add that insurgents and militias will simply wait for a U.S. drawdown to resume their violence eventually.
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